



**Department of
Education**

School Decision Making in Family Disputes policy

Effective date: 3 February 2026

Version: 1.0

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1. Policy statement

This policy, procedures and the guidelines for School Decision Making in Family Disputes assist school staff to understand their responsibilities and supports informed decision-making regarding family dispute matters that impact on the educational program of a student and/or the operations of a school.

Where the circumstances require action by the school, the school will be guided by considering and balancing its paramount considerations:

- the best educational interests of the student
- the safety and welfare of students on school premises or involved in a school activity
- maintaining the day-to-day operation and management of the school, and all persons on school premises.

The school will engage in a collaborative and respectful manner with the student's parents or family members. This is the preferred means of undertaking substantive decisions for a student's education. Where a collaborative approach is not possible, principals and teachers will continue to act in a manner consistent with the school's paramount considerations.

A student's circumstances can be affected by court orders. Where possible and appropriate the school will assist the parties to meet their obligations under the orders. However, the school will not interpret, mediate or police a court order on behalf of either party.

2. Policy rules

School decisions must be made by balancing the paramount considerations owed.

Decision makers comply with the supporting procedures for managing risks.

3. Responsibility for implementation and compliance

Compliance with the policy is the responsibility of all school staff. Principals are responsible for monitoring.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all school staff.

5. Supporting procedures

[School Decision Making in Family Disputes procedures](#)

6. Definitions

Student

A person who is enrolled at a school or short-term visiting student, involved in school activities, both in school and out of school.

7. Related documents

Relevant legislation or authority

School Education Act 1999 (WA)

School Education Regulations 2000 (WA)

Related Department policies

Alcohol and Other Drugs in the Workplace policy

Child Protection in Department of Education Sites policy

Work Health and Safety policy

Other documents

Guidelines for School Decision Making in Family Disputes

School Decision Making for Family Disputes procedures

8. Contact information

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9. History of changes

Effective date	3 February 2026
Last update date Policy version no.	1.0
Notes	The new School Decision Making in Family Disputes policy and procedures were endorsed by Director General on 19/01/2026 D25/1067371

10. More information

Supporting content

Procedure

[School Decision Making in Family Disputes procedures](#)

Policy review date

3 February 2029
